

Art Unit: 1797

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Daniel J. Pereira on 2/6/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 1 line 1 before “,” – including negatively charged particles obtained from rivers, harbors, the sea floor, or sandbanks – has been inserted; in line 3 “m²” has been changed to - m³ - ; in line 8 after “of” – clarified – has been inserted; in line 9 before “,” – to produce a dewatered sludge – has been inserted; and in line 11 before “.” – and has a weight-average molecular weight Mw of higher than 1.0×10^7 – has been inserted.

Claims 5 and 10 have been canceled.

In claim 23 line 2 “flocculant” has been changed to – flocculating agent –.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Peter A. Hruskoci/ whose telephone number is (571) 272-1160. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on (571) 272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1797

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/Peter A. Hruskoci/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1797

2/6/09